

memorandum

DATE: SEP 27 1990

REPLY TO

EH-322

SUBJECT

Interim Position on the Installation of New Halon 1301 Fixed Fire Suppression Systems and Halon Portable Fire Extinguishers

TO:

Distribution

Concerns over environmental deterioration caused by the proliferation of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halon compounds in the atmosphere have prompted an international effort to mitigate the damage. A degree of consensus has been reached as evidenced by the adoption of the Montreal Protocol by 59 countries as of June 1990. Further, these Parties agreed to adjust the protocol to fully phase out use of CFCs and halons by the year 2000 where adequate substitute products or processes exist.

The Department of Energy (DOE) has responded to these initiatives by undertaking an effort to develop a DOE-wide policy on the issue which would include administrative and facility design restrictions on CFC and halon use. A draft DOE Order is in preparation under the joint leadership of the Office of Project and Facilities Management and the Federal Energy Management Program. Final approval of that policy, however is not anticipated for some time. In the interim, and reflecting our responsibilities in the area of worker and facility safety, we offer the following guidance when confronting the issue of the use of halon 1211 and 1301 for fire suppression.

The underlying position for this guidance is that DOE will be actively discouraging the installation of new halon systems and portable extinguishers.

Effective the date of this memorandum':

1. No new halon fire suppression systems shall be proposed to mitigate fire and life safety hazards. Alternative protection in the form of carbon dioxide fire suppression systems, "pre-action" type sprinkler systems or "wet pipe" sprinkler systems coupled with

automatic fire detectors shall be considered. Automatic sprinklers are the preferred alternative although it is recognized that facility-specific design considerations may warrant the use of carbon dioxide.

2. No new halon portable fire extinguishers shall be purchased.
3. In Title II designs which have not yet reached 30 percent completion, projects shall cancel plans and specifications to use halon systems. Alternative protection as described above shall be considered.
4. Halon systems for which contracts exist and where substantial pre-installation development costs have been incurred should be completed. Where local consensus cannot be reached on this issue such systems should not be completed.
5. Existing Halon systems should be maintained pending issuance of a final DOE position on CFCs/Halons (reference above draft Order).
6. Variances from the above guidance will be considered on a case-by case basis in consultation with the appropriate program office, EH and, if necessary to resolve conflicting opinions, the DOE Fire Safety Committee.

Future revisions to DOE Order 6430.1A, General Design Criteria and 5480.7, Fire Protection will incorporate the above. In the meantime, the widest possible distribution of this position **should be made.**

Questions pertaining to the above position should be directed to Mr. Dennis Kubicki, EH-322, on (FTS) 233-4794.



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